1/12/72

Dear Ed,

Thanks for the Saga, the clips and your letter of 1/10. Usually I am in accord with your analyses, and usuassly they range up to brilliant and most incisevo. This time I disagree with all but minor aspects. For example, there is without doubt both misrepresentation and deception. There is only the most remote chance of a substitution, and nobody does do that on a large scale. It might have been done with one picture of a wound in the back. On the basis of what I has said, I'd be unwilling to consider any more.

I don't have time to go into all the possible purposes served, but why not put yourr own excellent mind to work on this, beginning with the assumption that there was no need to do this, no clamor for it (only four applied, not counting me, and I did 11/66 for all and intermittently thereafter for specific parts). If only four applied, how much interest do you think there was? Did you see a single story, no matter how small, anywhere, asking on 10/29 now it can be done, it should be? Any ringing editorials? This should be the beginning of yout thinking, as I see it.

On the Kaplan book, I declined collaboration but offered other help months ago. I will not change the decision. Your advice is right and proper for one who has not already ruined his life and his literary prospects, a younger man with more years ahead. The curse is as you put it. But also ask yourself another question: If I do not do what I am doing, who else will? And at the risk of sounding conceited, of those you know or know of, who else can? So, what you are asking is that I quit, in content. You don't mean this, And I won't do it.

What nobody has yet seen or if anyone has seen what nobody has yet told me and what I now say to anyone for the first time is that this Lattimer ploy is really an act of desparation. The tradegy is that those who could have made it possible for us to really do something about it wouldn't or worse, didn't have the brains to see it. We are in such bad shape with all our geniuses.

I don't really think I need a "fresh perspective". Your reference is unclear to me. If you mean on any other subject, I think you are wrong. If you mean on this one, until I have made a major error, and to date I think I have not, then I think the record speaks for itself. My interests are not limited to this subject. They can't be because nothing that has happened since can be divorced from it.

But I do appreciate the advice. Hope we can have time to chat when I'm there. It may have to be on a Sunday a.m. if not after the show, when there may be too many for any real, communications.

Thanks.

ccJP